

WASHINGTON STAR

MAY 25 1964

Legislators Scan Cost Of Service Retirement

By the Associated Press

Some Congressmen are beginning to worry that the cost of pay and benefits to retired members of the armed services may reach several billion dollars by 1980. One prediction goes as high as \$10 billion.

This prospect has led to unprecedented talk that the retirement program, or at least part of it, be put on a contributory basis, with servicemen paying part of the costs of their future hospitalization and retirement pay.

Any proposal like this, however, is sure to run into vigorous opposition from such groups as the Retired Officers Association, a powerful lobby on Capitol Hill.

But, what makes the talk significant is the fact that it is coming from some key members of the House Armed Services Committee, a congressional

group most friendly to retired servicemen.

For example, Representative Rivers, Democrat of South Carolina, the man who will succeed the retiring Representative Vinson, Democrat of Georgia, as chairman next year, says, "We have to be concerned about the mounting cost of retirement."

"We don't want to erode any of the benefits of past retirement," Mr. Rivers said in an interview, "but we have to look toward the future and control this thing."

He did not say what members of the committee had in mind, but he said that he could not rule out a contributory plan.

Mr. Rivers emphasized that such a plan would be paid by men who are in service now toward their retirement, not by men who have already retired.

Mr. Rivers heads a subcom-

mittee studying the problem. One member, Representative Hebert, Democrat of Louisiana, has made the prediction that the retirement program could cost \$10 billion by 1980.

"In any case," he said, "we can't ignore this situation any longer. Retirement costs are going up and up. We have to find some solution."